

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 02570 271636Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /070 W

-----087754 271650Z /44

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6429

INFO AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2570

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PDEV RH US UK MI

SUBJECT: RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT: SUGGESTION FOR BRIEFING OF
PRESIDENT BANDA

1. I HAD MY FIRST CONVERSATION WITH THE NEW HOME AFFAIRS
MINISTER, WILTED PHIRI. HE IS A FORMER DIPLOMAT AND A
MAN WHO HAS LONG HAD CONTACT AND FRANK DEALINGS WITH
AMERICANS. HE IS WELL INFORMED AND HAS FOLLOWED
THE RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT INITIATIVES CLOSELY. HE IS ALSO
VERY CLOSE TO THE PRESIDENT.

2. PHIRI WAS INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING THE RHODESIAN
SITUATION. I EXPLAINED WHY WE BELIEVE OUR PROPOSAL HAS A
BETTER CHANCE OF PRODUCING AN ORDERLY TRANSITION TO A
VIABLE AND PROPEROUS INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE THAN OTHER
SOLUTIONS, PARTICULARLY THE INTERNAL OPTION, AND I SAID
THAT IF ANY OF THE NATIONALISTS DECIDE TO COOPERATE WITH
SMITH IN AN INTERNAL ACTION WE COULD BE HEADED DOWN
A LONG AND DIFFICULT ROAD.

3. PHIRI DESCRIBED SOME OF THE INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS
WITHIN RHODESIA AND THEN NOTED THAT SITHOLE'S PRINCIPAL
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BACKER WAS MALAWI'S PRESIDENT HASTINGS BANDA. HE SAID
HE WAS CERTAINLY NOT SPEAKING FOR HIS GOVERNMENT, BUT HE
WONDERED WHETHER IT WOULD NOT BE WORTHWHILE TRYING TO
IMPRESS BANDA WITH THE DANGERS OF THE INTERNAL OPTION.
I SAID I THOUGHT THE IDEA WAS AN INTERESTING ONE.

4. SO FAR AS I AM AWARE, WE HAVE NEVER ENGAGED BANDA IN

A DISCUSSION OF OUR RHODESIA INITIATIVE. I THINK WE WOULD WANT TO BE CAREFUL DOING SO THAT WE WERE NOT ENCOURAGING IM TO PLAY A ROLE WHICH WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL AT THIS STAGE. IT SEEMS POSSIBLE TO ME ALSO THAT THE FRONTLINE MIGHT TAKE UMBRAGE AT OUR ENGAGING BANDA IN THE DIALOGUE WHICH MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS U.S. ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE INTERNAL SOLUTION. ON THE OTHER HAND IF WE WERE TO CONSULT FIRST WITH FRONTLINE MEMBERS, EXPLAINING TO THEM THE PURPOSE OF A DISCUSSION WITH BANDA, THE ACTION MIGHT PROVIDE A USEFUL MEANS OF HELPING TO DEFLECT SITHOLE FROM STARTING DOWN THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT ROUTE.

4. ASST SECY MOOSE WILL OF COURSE WANT TO COMMENT ON THIS. IN ANY CASE IT IS NOT SOMETHING THAT ONE WOULD NEED OR WANT TO DO IMMEDIATELY.
LOW

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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